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END OF LIVING
BY
A. L. STONE.

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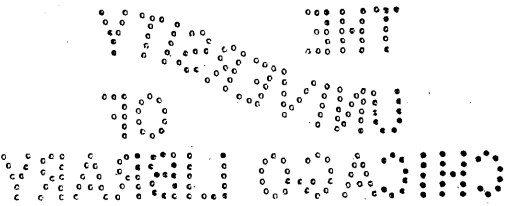
THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE "BOSTON YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION," MONDAY EVENING, MAY 24, 1858,

BY

ANDREW L. STONE,
PASTOR OF PARK STREET CHURCH, BOSTON.

PUBLISHED FOR THE ASSOCIATION.

BOSTON:
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Correspondence.

ROOMS OF THE BOSTON YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION,
TREMONT TEMPLE.

BOSTON, *May* 25, 1858.

REV. ANDREW L. STONE:

Dear Sir — At a meeting of the BOSTON YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, held this day, it was voted, "That the thanks of this Association be presented to the Rev. Andrew L. Stone, for the able and eloquent Sermon delivered by him at our Anniversary, and that a copy of it be requested for publication."

In communicating this vote to you, allow me to express my earnest conviction that the publication of your Sermon, which it gave me so great pleasure to hear, will be productive of much good to young men.

Very respectfully yours,

CHARLES DEMOND,
Corresponding Secretary.

HILLSIDE, ROXBURY, *May* 31, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR

I think I have no right to refuse the request of the YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, expressed through you in such courteous terms. I therefore submit the Discourse to their disposal.

Yours very truly,

A. L. STONE.

CHARLES DEMOND, ESQ.

SERVICE,

THE END OF LIVING.

"But Jesus called them unto Him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

"And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant;

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—Matt. 20: 25–28.

There had come upon that small community of the twelve disciples a little spasm of human ambition. It was not unnatural, that with their views of the dignity of their Lord, and the grandeur of his coming kingdom, and their intimacy with him, their thoughts should sometimes turn to the question of the personal honors

destined for them in his coronation. This fever had kindled now upon their hearts, and was creeping along their veins. A little incident which draws to itself our most absorbed attention, as letting in our look so familiarly upon the style of intercourse between Jesus and his friends, had served to quicken these pulses into fuller life. The mother of James and John, watching a moment of the Saviour's solitude, had come into his presence, accompanied by the young men, to ask of him a favor. So she worshipped him, and besought of him "*a certain thing*." "What wilt thou?" responds the gracious voice. And her faith in him, and her fond aspirations as a mother, together make utterance, "Grant that these, my two sons, may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom." From her lips Jesus looks into their eyes, which urge the same ambitious request.

Slowly to their eagerness he replies, "Ye know not what ye ask." Ye know not the price of such an honor. They that reign with me must first suffer with me. There is a cup of bitterness we must drain together. There is a bloody baptism of agony to be endured. The way to my crown is the way of the Cross. Are ye able to tread this path with me? "We are able," protest those intrepid spirits. And the prophetic eyes rest on them a moment, and then the voice makes final answer, "Ye shall indeed partake of the fellowship of my sufferings, and the rewards shall be given according to the purpose of my Father." The other disciples hear of this dialogue, and are filled with jealous indignation. Have James and John attempted to supplant them in the dignities and lordships of their Master's coming triumph? Shall those two inherit chief places, and take precedence of their

brethren? What right have they to speak first, and to be preferred in the appointment of those splendid prizes? So the leaven of an unholy and unfriendly rivalry threatens to spread through this little fraternity.

It is time for the Saviour to announce to them the principles of advancement and exaltation in his kingdom. He does not interdict their aspiring—he does not frown upon a noble competition. But he turns these currents of their souls into new channels, and guides them to other issues. He opens to these strenuous spirits the true field of honor—the arena of a better strife, and holds before their glowing eyes the prizes his followers are to contend for. He shows them how diverse in his kingdom the rule of promotion, from that of the princes and courts of earth. There the chief places are the heights of immunity and prerogative—here the depths

of self-abasement and self-sacrifice. The one preëminence is reached by climbing — the other by going down. The one is the crowning of pride — the other of humility. The one asserts the right to levy and receive tribute — the other inaugurates the law of beneficence as the kingliest supremacy of moral being.

So the great Teacher, in this lesson, sets forth before his followers, not incidentally, but directly and distinctly, that which shall be with them the aim of life.

I have thought it might, on this occasion, be profitable for you, as young men, whose years are yet before you, whose career lies along this earnest age, and whose hearts are not insensible to a true ambition, to consider what is for a Christian the legitimate aim of life — and that which answers the question for a disciple of Christ, answers it for all men — and thus my theme is, THE TRUE END OF LIFE.

The End of Life with most men, so far as it is definite and specific, is something seen at the terminus of their hard work. It is the goal of their race. It is to be run for, and attained as the prize for running. It is to be toiled for, and possessed as the fruit of toil. It is to be striven after, and grasped as the victor's reward. It is not therefore realizable to-day and every day. By and by it shall be their inheritance. It is not near at hand — it lies out yonder. It is not within reach now — there are broad spaces to be traversed before the eager fingers can touch it. If it were so near it were not so well worth having. It must be distant and lofty, or it could not be an object of aspiration. There must then needs be an apprenticeship unto it, and a probation for it, and chances and hazards between.

This ideal of life — this end of living — may be expressed in one word. It is writ-

ten out there on the future in glittering capitals. The face glows in its reflected lustres. That is a fortunate day which brings out the writing larger and brighter, because so it is nearer. That is misfortune which dims its clearness, for then it recedes. That word is, with all the straining competitors, "SUCCESS."

Ask them to translate it, and they speak a various language. It is the one gateway of their desire opening into fruition. But that fruition must, of course, meet the internal relishes of the heart, and these are as diverse as human identity.

With one the portal of promise opens into *a garden of pleasure*. There the skies are always bright, the air is soft, and winter and gloom never come. The walks are Elysian. The bowers reveal the tastes of a Sybarite. Luxury and ease are the tutelar divinities of the place. Fruit and flower blush and bloom to-

gether. Sweet bowls are mixed for each hour of thirst, and rare banquets anticipate the coming of hunger. There is no toil, no want, and no satiety. Desire is ever fresh and keen, and waited upon by unfailing gratification. This is the Paradise of the Senses — the Mohammedan Heaven pitched in some favored spot of earth. Success with this aspirant is the inscription that arches this garden gate. He attains when the key is put into his hands, and he may enter and dwell there at home.

With another it opens into an abode of stately wealth. Broad walks lead to the noble pile. Marble steps climb to the colonnaded porch. Within are spacious halls and grand apartments. The arts have brought in and left their triumphs. Liveried servitors attend upon the master's will. His guests are royally lodged. His family are above want, discomfort, and all

vulgarity. Their costumes and equipage advertise him as the builder of such greatness. He is not a gross sensualist, but success with him is the coronation of *Pride*.

With another it opens upon *office* and *place*. He puts on magisterial robes and dignities. He takes the sceptre and the reins of control, and occupies the curule chair. Success here is political advancement. In a republic these aspirants are legion.

With another it is the voice of *fame* — a wide-echoing note caught up and repeated from man to man, from land to land, from age to age. It opens upon the level of the select few who stand together — the peerage of human distinction.

With another it conducts into some shadowy court of *personal influence*. This man would be a leader — be looked up to — be courted — be followed. He would be first in fashion — first in social position — the law

in criticism — in manner more winning, or conversation more brilliant, or wit more admired, or in richness of mental wealth a purer and deeper vein of golden ore. So the prizes vary. But the racers run together on the one course and for the one goal of *Success*.

Here and there may be one who can hardly be said to aspire at all — with whom it is enough to breathe, and eat, and sleep, like lower animal natures — whose pulses of life are material pulses, not of soul or of thought — drowsy natures, human sloths, content to vegetate rather than live. For these there is no good to be *pursued*. They pursue nothing. They take what comes — their highest happiness is *Apathy*, their keenest sensibility when this is disturbed.

But men who really live have objects to live for. They live to win these objects. Their goal is success — their aim to

achieve it. This is their ambition, their end of life.

Now, in no such sense of the word does the Saviour's teaching sanction this as the aim of life for his followers.

Success in this ideal is *selfish*. It seeks to gather, not to impart. It is not a fountain — it is a reservoir. It does not send forth streams — wide flowing — making greenness and music every where. It turns the tribute of every valley and shower in upon itself.

Success is intent upon its own promotion, whatever heads lie low. It must win its own objects, whatever fortunes are wrecked. Its life-long campaigns are for the crowning of its own desire, whoever falls in the struggle, or lives portionless.

In such a world as this, therefore, it can only prosper by competition. It thus isolates man from man in the antagonisms of mutual self-interest. It is natural to it

to deny sympathy to others' losses, and to rejoice when the failure of others leaves to it a clearer field. It must be unfraternal. It is open to the meanness of envy, to the sin of coveting, to the temptations of the gilded bribes held up before it by the fingers of Dishonesty, Fraud, and Crime.

So that in its rarest achievements, there lie within it bitter and avenging memories, the ghosts of an accusing past, which no expiation can lay.

But this end of life, if it were unimpeachable in its morality, as I have said, lies remote. More hazards than can be numbered imperil its final attainment. Each day the feet may march on steadily towards it without one step of retrogression. But suppose the march should be suddenly arrested, and the feet themselves disappear from the track forever. That life must be pronounced a failure. It is like a voyage whose ventures go down in the mid sea.

Suppose the feet march on till they have strength to go no farther, and yet have not touched the goal. Many such a history of disappointment the sad annals of human life have written down — baffled endeavors — fruitless struggles — hopes never tasting the sweets of certainty. Then what? The toil cannot be renewed. The years of endeavor and strength are behind. The season is past — no new seed can be sown in patient waiting for better harvests — it is winter time — the close of the year — the December of the grave. O, million votaries of this glittering bawble, Success, why will ye lavish all the price you hold in your right hand, wherewith to purchase good, upon this orbed, painted, vapory, hollow splendor? Look well, O Christian youth, upon what ideal of life you lay out sense and soul, your years and your eternity! Let the master of wisdom, the lover

of your soul, the God of providence, teach you the *true end of living*.

"Whosoever will be great among you, let him be *your minister;* and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be *your servant*."

As one word describes the false end, so one describes the true. *That* is "SUCCESS." *This* is "SERVICE."

Instantly at this word we lift our eye. We look up and look out. We look away from self. The object of regard — the point of aim — moves out of this home sphere, of which self is the centre and the circumference, and rests on some other centre. All the currents change direction — flowing from, instead of into, the soul. The tides sweep outward from this inner harbor, this secluded and land-locked bay, to wash lone islands, far away, and pour their waves on remote continental shores. If this word and this idea take

possession of us, there are three questions we are at once inspired to ask. We are to serve — *Whom? What?* and *How?*

Whom? It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." This great Being — complete in himself, and girt about with glorious perfections, which make him absolutely independent — has yet a service for every creature. Out here in space, and beneath this part of his heavens, he has fitted up this province of earth. It needs care, culture, and ordering. Much of this need he meets and manages without other intervention. He makes the sun to know his rising and going down; the moon her waxing and waning; the stars their courses; the seasons their annual circuit; the swaying ocean its slow and mighty vibrations; the winds when to wake and when to sleep; and all the elemental laws their exact force and regulated functions.

Herein he asks, he wants, no service of men.

When he had planted the garden of Eden, he put there one man, "the gardener Adam," "to dress it and keep it." The flower seeds blown over the Eden walls, or swept out on the river that flowed through it, have propagated themselves here and there on the soil which sin has blighted. But the thistle down is lighter than those seeds of bloom and fragrance, and has blown wider, and more multiplied its armed harvests. If the garden needed tending, much more does the thorny desert need subduing. It is a part of the faith which prophecy inspires, that this material earth shall bloom again like that morning Paradise. This subjection of the wilderness needs a human hand. God nurtures tree and flower; but his hand holds no plough, drills no rock, and lays out no more gardens since the first

was overrun with waste. The great Proprietor, the Lord of the manor, has sent his laborers into this wild to till it for him. They have it in charge to extirpate the briers that loop their rasping chain around bare ankles; to uproot thistle and thorn; to make the rough places smooth, the crooked straight, and to cover the arid wastes with vernal greenness and golden grain. More and more is this work advancing; and in a thousand fields, where once tangled disorder ruled undisturbed, Nature has put off all her grimness, and smiles in soft Eden beauty. Each laborer has his own special plat to till and adorn; his own diverse implements of toil; his special harvest to sow and gather in. To God, earth's natural Proprietor, man owes the service of his brow's heated rain, and his hand's hardened palm.

But the material earth — with all its capabilities, its projected and prophetic im-

provements, its dawning order, serenity, and fruitfulness — exists not for itself, not simply as a lifeless mirror of the divine Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness. This work upon the earth is all to fit it and perfect it as the home of man in his probation. It is even, the work itself, chiefly valued as furnishing for man fields of activity, and processes of training.

The care of man, then, God's weak, frail, dependent child, is, more than all adorning of the dumb clod, God's work for his laborers in this distant province of the crown.

God's own most precious investment in this outlying territory is the wealth of souls. The mines that vein the rocks, and run their golden arteries among the hills, reflect no lustre to God's eye comparable with those spirit-gems (dim in their rough incrustments) which he would polish, and set in the coronet of his Son. More priceless to him than the rarest flower, for

whose bloom and perpetuity he has provided,— from the royal lily to the century-blossoming aloe, — is the smallest petal of charity opening its pure white in the human heart. Not half so real his intent to level down the rugged heights and level up the dark chasms of earth into smoothness and harmony, as to soften all the asperities of man's nature, and bring his crested pride and oppressed and suffering lowliness into the just and equal relations of universal brotherhood. Not decorated lawns and harvest plains are God's final end or most delighted choice in the refining of Nature, but the gentle influence, the chastening charm, which the process itself, and its result, shall breathe upon the nurture of all sweet and tender graces in character. Though the prophecy were literal, that the bear should eat straw like the ox, and the wolf and the kid, the young lion and the fatling, should lie down

together, it carries a yet grander typical meaning, that the wolfish traits, the carnivorous propensities, shall be chastened out of the household of God's human family, and the strong and weak dwell side by side, with none to molest or make afraid.

This being God's care and wish for earth and its inhabitants, he offers us the work as service for him. He breaks up, distributes, and makes over the contract, in parts more or less proportionate to the whole, unto human operatives. All that engage upon any section of the work are doing him service, and fulfilling the end for which he created them and set them each his task. Whosoever makes one blade of grass to grow where none grew before, one flower of virtue to bloom on the sterile rock of our own hard nature, is forwarding God's season beneath these skies. But the laborers must recognize God, or it is, on their part, no voluntary, loving

service — no tribute he can accept. They must render the sweat of their brow to him as Proprietor, to him as Disposer, to him as Head of all, to him as Rewarder. He who ploughs, and sows, and reaps for his own garner, — though he has subdued the stubble, and fenced off a cultivated and burdened field, — shall not be accepted as God's servant. All humanity and philanthropy must go up first of all to God, and bathe itself in his love, and swear allegiance to him, and catch, in divine sympathy, the beating of his heart, and enter into the procession of his purposes, or it cannot love man aright; nor will it be accepted, however earnest in its own independent labors as doing God service. Our service on the earth, on man's behalf, in furtherance of an ideal perfection for the human individual and human society, must be unto God; consciously, definitely, offered to him, and

gathering its life ever from its alliance with his counsels and his providence.

If we ask now, secondly, as to this service, "WHAT" it shall be, — that is, not as to its methods and details, but that consummation which it shall seek to realize, — our inquiry is met, as before, by the utmost positiveness of the Scripture, "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Service that honors God, must regulate itself by his expressed will. It must be obedience to his commands. It magnifies thus his authority, and exalts his headship. It cannot, therefore, set aside his estimates of human weakness, sinfulness, and need, and proceed upon some other basis. It cannot frame its theories of human perfectibility, individual or social, from a mere earthly philosophy. It cannot work against, nor apart from, the Word of God.. It must be

scriptural; and being scriptural, it must be impartially so. It must honor the whole Scripture. It cannot be eclectic as to the sins it will assail, or the good it will undertake. It must consent to no sin. It cannot defer to any form of evil, to any adversary of the High and Holy One, without disloyalty and treason to God. Its charter is, "Do good unto all men as thou hast opportunity." It cannot love one neighbor, and look with cold, unpitying eyes and folded arms upon another. All that God hates, it must seek to destroy: all that he pleads for, it must seek to nourish and invigorate. Universal, uncompromising obedience is the only real obedience — and this must be the law of that service that honors the Great Master.

It must accept its orbit from God. Where he says *work*, it must pitch its tent, strip its arm bare, and begin. His providence is a profound teacher of his will. It cir-

cumscribes our field of personal toil. It leads us to our appointed task. "Work here," it says to one, — "in this humble spot, — work obscurely, under this shadow, — unseen of men." "Work here," it says to another, "at laying foundations. Lay them deep out of sight. Drop, into the seemingly insatiable depths of the sea, fields of gravel and mountains of rock. Toil on; the structure is rising invisible. Not in your day shall it outcrop above the wave. You shall be judged of your generation to have wrought in vain. Men shall call it and you visionary. But another day and other builders shall find it towering up, ridgy, and broad, and strong — fit foundation for some pyramid of human advancement." "Go, toil yonder, far away among strangers, where night broods with perennial arctic gloom." "Take this high and responsible post. You tremble, but you cannot be excused." "Fill this menial

office." All work for God is equally honorable. The highest seraph has no prouder charge than that of the two disciples sent to unloose the colt for Jesus to ride on. "Sit here and watch; '*they also serve that wait.*'" "Walk down into this vale of poverty, and keep a cheerful face." "Enter this chamber of pain, and endure with unmurmuring submission." All service for God's glory takes office from his sovereign hand. To every challenge of his lips when he needs a messenger, no matter whither, it has but one response. "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth."

It consults his honor, too, by seeking to communicate of his fulness to men. God is the fountain of all good, but there are grand depths of that fountain that cannot flow except as channels are opened in human hearts and lives. A little of God's brightness flows down in sunbeams, and twinkles in faint, far-off stars. A little of

his vitality courses through the veins of nature, and comes up in tree, and flower, and the wide wealth of meadow green. Something of his refreshing goodness bubbles up in the springs of cool wooded recesses, and sparkles in the brooks that run among the hills. Doubtless his providence has a sovereign sweep. But much of his pulsing beneficence pauses to waken pulses in human bosoms, and get currency along the arteries from human hearts. God pities the poor, but his bounties to them are in our storehouses. He would guide the blind, but the light is in our eyes; be feet to the lame, but ours are the feet that must run; lift up the fallen, but our hand is the grasping link of connection; feed the famishing, but the loaf rests upon our table; wipe away tears from the sorrowing, but the gentle office is left to our soft touch, the kiss of loving human lips; part the fetters from all the wronged and enslaved, and he hangs the key at our girdle.

Now, when our service lingers in any of these walks, we dishonor God, to whose heart we deny expression, to whose fulness we refuse a channel, from whose riches we cut off his natural and rightful heirs, and whose character, which is his moral omnipotence, that by which he reigns in the heights of a moral administration, we thus foully malign.

Genuine service, then, as a *life aim*, must fasten itself for its end upon God's glory — nothing less, nothing other. Every thing other must be less. All single strokes of that toil, all nearer and narrower issues, must, consciously in their inspiration and motive, look on to this final issue, or it must fail of a divine approbation, of all real success and all personal rewards.

When we ask again, *How* — how this service to God, and for his glory, is to be rendered, the Scripture answer is as broad and catholic as any man could

desire. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Our doing, of course, in its immediate field, respects earth and man. What we owe to the mute earth we owe for man's sake. Our care for man must discriminate his diverse and complex nature. That nature is triune — body, mind, and soul. Its wants will therefore be corporeal, mental, and spiritual; and the service we render must be equally varied and comprehensive.

It will not do to despise the body. God has honored it by the exquisite art he has lavished upon its structure, by the contributions he has furnished to its comfort and health, by the use to which he has appointed it. His infinite skill has reared, and shaped, and tinted it; his seasons, and climates, and soils have their marches, their changes, and their forces to bring it bounties; it is the home and school, in time, of the deathless spirit. For its noblest per-

fection, for the rectification of its abuses, for its most intelligent and consummate training as the medium of mind and the servitor of soul, how much remains to be studied, experimented, settled, and done! When there lies between us and any human spirit a debased, or a neglected, or a suffering body, we must remember that our way to the dweller within opens through the flesh. We cannot leap over these corporeal barriers and sit down within in the confidence and sympathy of any heart whose external humanity we have ignored.

If it be so needful a charity to care for the tenement, how much more to care for the tenant! to pour light in upon a darkened mind! to kindle orbs of truth and stars of guidance in this inner sky! to sweep away the mists of prejudice and the fogs of error! to clear up perplexities and doubts, and open paths of safety for bewildered feet!

But there are within the soul deeper shadows than those of doubt, sadder wanderings than straying from the truth—even departing from the right, shadows of sin and guilt. He that opens a blind eye to the glorious Sun has done a blessed act. He that lets in upon a benighted understanding the illumination of Truth is a yet grander benefactor. But he that leads a lost soul to the Sun of Righteousness "shall shine," in honor, "as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever."

So must we make our service in its methods a ministration of good to the whole man. We must go round about his entire humanity, and at every inlet of soul and sense pour in our contributions through all the circles of his being. We must shelter him when houseless, though we crowd ourselves; we must warm his chill frame at our hearthstone, though we sit farther from

the fire; we must share with him, when an hungered, our barrel of meal and cruise of oil, though both are low; we must visit him in sickness and in prison; part our raiment for his nakedness, and feel all his bonds as though bound with him in the same hard captivity.

We must exercise our heart in universal human sympathies, our hands in a ministrant care as wide as all unrelieved human want, weep with all that weep, (there are enough to rejoice with the joyful,) enter every sorrowful lot where our brethren sit forlorn and desolate, and grow into the brightening history of burdened lives, as personal helpers and friends, blending our stronger and better fortunes with each downcast condition, in such sacred and self-sacrificing partnership as he proffered to us, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor.

We must teach the ignorant, scatter

leaves of light and healing through homes of superstition and error, as May showers her orchard blossoms.

No hand of one sinking that is stretched to us for help must we daintily refuse to touch, no cry of woe to hear, no most menial act to perform, if we are nearest the helpless sufferer.

Then all that we are and have are advantages to be shared, a trust for distribution, a common fund for such pensioners of God as he shall refer to our door. We have not built alone for ourselves, but for all the shelterless; we have not laid up gold for ourselves or our heirs, but for all the penniless; our true heirs must inherit while we live; we have not gathered wisdom to sit alone with it as a miser with his yellow treasure; we have not struggled with temptation and sin, and triumphed for our own enlargement and comfort, but that we may shout cheer and guidance to those that are still in the thick of the conflict.

Service, service to God for his glory, and in behalf of his blighted earth and his sinning, sorrowing, and struggling human household — service that limits itself only by its own capacity and the extent of human need — this is God's purpose in us, the challenge to all just ambition, the TRUE END OF LIFE.

Is this a lowly word and an ignoble mission? Is it a mark rather for contempt than aspiration?

But what bright or precious thing is there in the universe that has not its glory and its welcome in its office of ministration? Does the sun walk in yonder heavens just to display his own kingly splendors? or to light up the day, and charm forth the summer? Do the stars hang out their silver lamps to draw admiring eyes to those inaccessible heights? or to beautify the night for us, to soften its gloom, to guide the wanderer in the wild and on the sea,

and shed beams of hope upon heavy hearts? Bloom the flowers in the garden or the wilderness to regale themselves with their own sweetness? or to reflect to cheerless men the very smile of God, and unroll to each desert wayfarer the record of that goodness that has its thought, and care, and its prodigal dispensations even there? Do the fountains leap in mere wanton sportiveness, and the streams trip laughing down the vales, to please themselves with their own music and motion? or is it that the bird of the wild may dip his beak, and in that mirror dress his plumes, that the wild asses may quench their thirst, and a deeper greenness spring in valley and plain? Does the lightning wag its forked tongue and shoot afar the gleam of its flashing eye to amuse itself with human terrors, or make a show of celestial fireworks? or has it been thus for ages, hinting to dull-eyed men what swiftness, docility, and nimble

eloquence lay in it when it might serve as the messenger of thought? So all the forces of nature, each wind that blows, each royal oak that towers and falls into decay, each morning beam, each dewdrop of night, each shower of summer rain, each orchard bud, the stately tides of the sea, are out at service, harnessed to work, ministers to nature's health, man's comfort, and God's glory.

The great names that have come down to us in human annals — names that men love to remember as fountains of life and strength, flowing along the vale of the ages — benefactors of their day and their kind — have worn livery, and stood, and waited, and toiled at service.

Tall, and bright, and strong the angels gather in the presence. They excel in swiftness and might. Fit ambassadors of God if there were in space another such universe, with such a court and head.

Are they not all ministering spirits, servants to the lowliest children of earth?

What place did HE assume who was the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person? Did he come to earth to receive its homage, to gather its revenues, to see all its mountain tops a-smoke with incense fires kindled unto him? How reads our scripture?—"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Follow on those blessed footsteps from Bethlehem of Judea to Calvary. See in his early home the subject toiling boy; see his daily path, walled in with sick and dying, waiting his healing touch, his word of power; see his lips teaching lessons of truth and life, and his wistful eyes searching out all woe and pain, that he might cure and soothe; his hand feeding the famishing; his voice stilling the tempest, and the whole purpose of

his mission, to seek the straying, save the lost, and lift the fallen to the heights of his own blessed immortality. This was service indeed. Was it dishonor? Do we know it simply to wonder over it? After supper with his disciples once on the earth, he rose from the table, girded himself with a towel, and took a basin of water and washed his disciples' feet, and wiped them with the towel wherewith he was girded. "Know you," said he, "what I have done?" "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought to wash one another's feet."

God the throned Love is not impassive Love, idle Love, resting on its own eternal fulness and sufficiency. All his imperial attributes do service to his creatures. He is *our* Creator, *our* Benefactor, *our* Governor, *our* Father; and in these relations his perfections empty themselves for our good at our feet. What is all God's be-

neficence but service to some creature's good?

So that this lowly word wears the highest honors in the realm of God. Not only must they that would reign first serve, but to serve *is* to reign. It is itself kingly; it gives, it does not receive; it is Godlike.

This end of life is level to every capacity. He who could not achieve can serve. He may not be able to climb, but he is quite competent to lay himself down as a stepping stone, and let another mount upon him. Others may out-top him in loftiness — he may go below all in humility. In the keen and selfish competitions of life the strife might go against him. Here there is freer room, fairer play, and far less competition. To win the prizes in the world's great struggle, his personal force may be unequal. To realize this ideal demands only a lowly and earnest heart.

Success, in this scheme of life, is denied

to no yearning. Not one of all before me need turn away from this preëminence in the sad conviction that it is too bright a crown for his aspirations. It demands neither that one be well-born, nor richly endowed with wit or gold, nor trained in the schools, nor favored of fortune, nor in any gift in advance of his fellows. However these negatives accumulate against him, the opportunity is his; the race-course is open, the goal before him.

This prize is not remote, so that one may toil long for it, and yet fall short. It hangs by the wayside. It is attained between sun and sun. The aspirant may be crowned with every chime of parting day, nay, of the passing hours. Sinking weary, but peaceful, to his nightly rest, his last conscious glad thought may be, I have won the End of Life since dawn.

All humble charities have, in this view, a surpassing dignity. If one can do no

more than to give a glass of cold water in the Master's name, in that act he has won his life's ambition, for he has wrought the *service* possible to him.

There can be with such a life no disappointment. It will not look back from the gray shadows of age and evening, and exclaim with failing breath, as the fair visions, chased so long, fade out, "I have wrought in vain, and lost all my laborious years." Every day has been for its hope a day of realization and fruition.

There can be in this ideal no fragmentary life. Its objects are gained with each falling sand of its allotted hour. Wherever the life pauses it is complete. Its highest ambition has already been rewarded. It has stood on the topmost summit that fired its youthful eye. One year ago, in this, our sacred annual Jubilee, there came among us, from a distant city, a young stranger, whose voice we had never heard before in these scenes, but whose name, an honored father's noble eloquence and catholic spirit, and the son's brave faith and heroic constancy, when perse-

cuted for humanity's sake, had already made known through the land. He stood on our platforms and in our pulpits, and mingled his voice with ours in the advocacy of great Christian and reformatory movements. Men read in his clear thought and fervent speech, his pleasant face and tone, his strong heart and broad charity, his fearless devotion to the right, and his championship of the suffering and wronged, the promise of a life that should be forceful and fruitful beyond ordinary lives. The year has passed, and with it that life in its young prime, and its broadening sphere and power, has ceased on the earth. A tragic Providence first shattered, then flung open that house of clay, and called away the beautiful spirit. O such a career cut short! O, stay, brother, and join hands with us in the strife that waxes hot! Put on thy armor again, young Christian warrior, and strike with us in the yet dubious field! Thou hast gone from us, and taken thy promotion before the victory was won. O, short, unfinished, broken life!

Nay, not so. It was gloriously spherical

and complete. No patriarch's before the flood was rounded with a more perfect finish. It was a life of constant, daily service for God and man. It waited not for a future and visionary success. It wrought its work and consummated its purposes hour by hour. To glorify the great Father, to bless each needy brother, to "stand up for Jesus," was its terminal goal, which it touched with every setting sun. And now, neither here nor hereafter, shall it ever know the wane of strength, the infirmities of age; never sigh as the shadow changes "*past noon*," but press right on to a broader and fuller prime in the nurture and growth of immortal years.

No, we need not weep over youthful names chiselled in marble, as though something were wanting to the completeness of their life here, if only human lips can bless them for benefactions scattered along the way, and God can pronounce upon them his own select eulogy. Companions and friends, are you debating what goal you will run for? Are you comparing the issues of straining human endeavors?

Roves your eye over wreaths, and chaplets, and crowns, that you may push for the proudest? Do you linger still, that you may gird your loins, and then stretch away, free and far?

O, look nearer. Grasp this unfailing good close at hand. Choose here, to-night. Give to the winds your ambitious dreams of SUCCESS, and make over all your vows to SERVICE.

God calls you. The church calls. The age calls. The long conflict of truth with error, right with wrong, liberty with oppression, calls you to leave selfish aims, and live for human good. Listen! the trumpets blow from out the thick of the strife. Proud banners inscribed to Christ and the church droop — nay, the banner-bearers trail the sacred symbol in the dust. Great institutions fall away in the hour of trial, when the tumult deepens; and the scarlet ranks of evil cheer amain. Rise up, youthful strength of the church! Cry, "Young men, to the rescue!"

I see you thus devoted, parting from this hour, separating from one another,

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and going out, each on his ministrant way. Sad faces brighten as you pass. Rough places are made smooth. Chasms of inequality and alienation are bridged over. Grass and flowers spring up on arid wastes where your feet have trod — the desert blossoms — the wilderness rejoices — you pause not to gather the good you scatter, but the breath of grateful benedictions follows you sweeter than odors of Eden, and seeds of life and harvests of joy are the footprints you leave behind. Die then early or late; you have lived long, and lived well. Though in youth, you shall depart full of days. A voice, above all sweetness and melody, shall speak your salutation as you lift and let fall the veil between us and the glory — "Well done, good and faithful SERVANT. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

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